

Confidential Hotline: 860-701-6000

Teen Dating Violence: What does it have to do with me?

October 2009

Right in Our Own Backyard: Southeastern CT Teen Dating Stats Higher Than National Average

In 2005, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted the Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance and the national statistic on students who were physically abused by their dating partner was astounding. Even more disturbing, the average in CT was almost 7% higher!

Fueled by this information, the Women's Center of Southeastern CT set out to survey students during the spring of 2009. Over 1240 8th-12th graders in New London County responded - there is much to be done, as indicated by the following statistics.

We're on Facebook!

www.facebook.com/ pages/Womens-Centerof-Southeastern-CT-Inc/9187521209

For more information:

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Phone: 860-447-0366 ext. 207 Fax: 860-440-3327 dfolsom@womenscenterofsect.org www.womenscenterofsect.org 9.2% of students nationwide have been hit, slapped, or physically hurt on purpose by their boyfriend or girlfriend.†

9.3% of Females9% of Males

16% of students in the state of **Connecticut** have been hit, slapped or physically hurt by their boyfriend or girlfriend.†

14.1% of Females17.8% of Males

12% of students in Southeastern Connecticut have been hit, slapped or physically hurt by their boyfriend or girlfriend.‡

12% of Females
13% of Males

The following students were surveyed during the Spring of 2009‡

- 1,242 Students Total
 267 8th Graders
 355 9th Graders
 302 10th Graders
 142 11th Graders
 154 12th Graders
 22 N/A
- 613 Females 608 Males 21 N/A
- 844 Caucasian
 87 African Americans
 61 Asians
 25 Native American
 46 Multi-Racial
 24 N/A

- † Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance United States." Surveillane Summaries, 2005. MMWR 2006;55.
- ‡ Women's Center of Southeastern CT. "Teen Dating Violence Survey." 2009.

Dating Violence... It's Not Just Physical

Emotional Abuse:

Of the 1242 students who were surveyed in New London County, 18% say they have felt threatened, humiliated, or told where they could go or who they could hang out with by a dating partner. ‡

22% of Females

15% of Males

Sexual Pressure:

In the same survey, 14% of students say they have been pressured by a dating partner to do something sexually that they did not want to do. ‡

20% of Females

8% of Males

Warning Signs

Early signs that your partner may become abusive:

- Extreme jealousy.
- Too many calls or text messages or checking in on your Facebook or MySpace accounts..
- Doesn't let you spend time with friends and family.
- Constant criticism about what you do, what you wear, who you hang out with.
- Attempting to control every aspect of your life.
- Demands sex or affection.
- Unpredictable mood swings.
- Calls you hurtful or mean names.
- Threatens abuse.
- Does not take responsibility of his/her own actions, problems or feelings.

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SICAL VIOLENCE SEXUAL Using Using COERCION INTIMIDATION and THREATS making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures making and/or threats to do something to hurt her smashing things threatening to leave her, to destroying her property commit suicide, report her Using Using to welfare · displaying weapons **ECONOMIC EMOTIONAL** making her drop charges making her do ABUSE **ABUSE** · preventing her from getting putting her down
 making her feel bad about herself or keeping a job · making her ask for money · calling her names · making her think she's crazy giving her an allowance . taking her money POWER playing mind games not letting her know about or have access to family income · making her feel guilty Using Using ISOLATION MALE PRIVILEGE controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, treating her like a servant
making all the big decisions where she goes · limiting her outside involvement . acting like the master of the castle . being the one to define men's using jealousy to justify actions and women's roles MINIMIZING **DENYING** and Using BLAMING CHILDREN making light of the abuse and not making her feel guilty about the children taking her concerns about it serious! saying the abuse didn't happen · using the children to shifting responsibility for abusive relay messages · saying she caused it

80% of students acknowledge that teen dating violence happens in their school.

"Most of the time, it was just playing that turned into anger on my part."

~Anonymous

11% of students admit to threatening and 7% have physically hit their dating partner.

"The hitting was just a slap after saying something mean."

~Male, 9th grade

46% of students know someone who has ever been hit, slapped, kicked or otherwise physically hurt by a dating partner.

"Girls who have been hit don't say it because we don't want to be judged."

~Female, 9th grade

"Teen dating violence in [name of school] is normal in teenage relationships...not a big deal."

Female, 12th grade

1 out of 4 students would not know what to do if their friends were in an abusive relationship.

85% of students think that teens experiencing dating violence will have trouble concentrating at school or may get lower grades.

"When I said I was hit or slapped, etc., my boyfriend and I were just play fighting/wrestling and he didn't mean to hurt me... he didn't know his own strength."

~Female, 9th grade

61% of students think additional teen dating violence prevention education is needed.

"[If I had known] this Women's Center is available for teens, I would have called for my friend."

Female, 12th grade

56% of students think teachers and counselors need additional teen dating violence prevention education.

"Teens usually don't want to get their friends in trouble but they feel helpless."

~Female, 9th grade

Only 3% of students have ever called the Women's Center for services.

‡These comments are real testimonials from students surveyed in Southeastern CT. Now the question is, what are we going to do about it?